Removal of import duty on cotton

1695. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any representation to remove import duty on cotton and cotton waste, since global cotton rate has increased upto 40 per cent, and

(b) if so, the details of action taken by Government to help ailing mills due to sharp increase in the raw material cost?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of above.

Non-utilisation of funds by commodity Boards

1696. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that funds allocated for commodity boards, Agriculture and Processed Food Product Export Development Authority (APEDA) and Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) were not utilized fully during the Tenth plan period;

(b) if so, the actual allocation for the Commodity Boards during the Tenth plan and reasons for un-utilization of funds;

(c) the negative impact in Commodity Boards due to un-utilization of allocated funds; and

(d) the details of proposed allocation of funds for the Eleventh Plan period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) Tea Board, Rubber Board, Spices Board, Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority(APEDA) and Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) had fully utilized the funds allocated to them during the Tenth Plan. Coffee Board had utilized Rs. 216.46 crore out of the allocated funds of Rs. 261.12 crore.

(b) and (c) The Tenth plan allocation and actual utilization of funds in respect of Coffee Board are as under:

(Rupees in crores)

	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	Total
Allocation	48.00	52.00	50.00	51.50	59.62	261.12
Utilisation	34.68	45.54	37.01	42.42	56.81	216.46

The under-utilisation of funds by the Coffee Board was due to problems faced by the coffee growers during the years 2002-03 and 2003-04 owing to the lower prices of coffee in both domestic and international markets, compounded by the adverse weather conditions. As the growers were not in a position to contribute the required share, they could not avail all the benefits extended under the Tenth Plan Scheme, which resulted in under-utilisation of funds. To bailout the growers a Coffee Relief Package was announced besides implementation of the Plan Schemes. As a result of the package and also due to the improved prices of coffee in both domestic and international markets, the growers are now in a better position compared to the years 2002-03 and 2003-04.

(d) The proposed allocation of funds during XI Plan for the Commodity Boards are given below:

(i) Tea Board : Rs.1000 crore (ii) Coffee Board : Rs. 750 crore

(iii) Rubber Board : Rs. 660.13 crore (iv) Spices Board : Rs. 350.04 crore

(v) APEDA : Rs. 750.00 crore (vi) MPEDA : Rs. 500.00 crore

Effect of big MNCs like Wal-Mart on retail market

1697. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the names of big businessmen and other foreign partners who have decided to set up retail stores in the country;

(b) what would be the total investment by these industrial houses in retail sector;

(c) whether Government are aware that Wal-Mart Company which has driven out thousands of local businessman in U.S. and other countries is forcing its entry into the retail market through back door;

(d) if so, the details thereof including the number of small stores proposed to be set up by that company; and

(e) in what manner Government propose to protect the small traders who are likely to be uprooted consequent upon the setting up of retail trade centres by multinationals like Wal-Mart?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL POLICY AND PROMOTION, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR): (a) As per extant policy, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is not permitted in Retail trade except in Single Brand product retailing. The approvals granted for FDI in Single Brand product retailing is given in the Statement [Refer to the Statement Appended to the Answer to USq 1677 Part (a) to (c)].

(b) As per data available with Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, foreign investment approved for Single Brand Retail from February, 2006 to May, 2007 was US$ 3.31 million. Information on domestic capital investment in the retail trade is not centrally maintained.